

Jan_Mar 2019

Friends of Edithvale – Seaford Wetlands Inc.



Number 161



Clamorous Reed-Warbler

Inside this issue:

To Freeway or not to Freeway	2
Snippets	3
Hide Visit	4
What is your favourite Bird	5

Wetland Warbler

WETLAND STUDY GROUP

Jim Wilson

Would YOU like to know more about our Wetlands? We know lots about the birds, but what about the hidden parts of the wetlands?

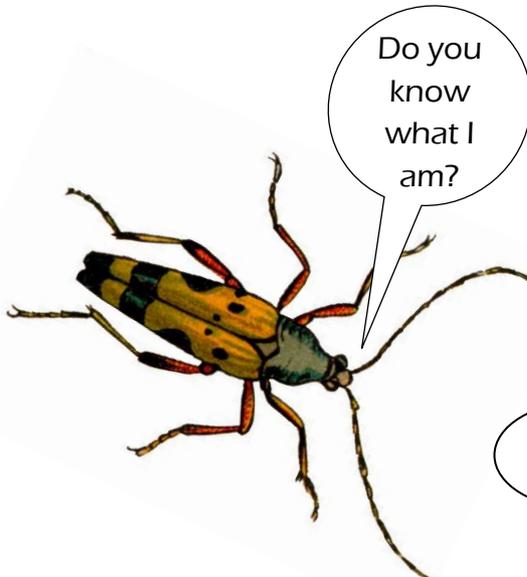
Would YOU like to know what's in the waters in the way of both visible organisms; and the micro-organisms seen only under a microscope.

What are our international visitors finding so delicious to eat in the muddy banks (that prepares them for the long journey back to the top of the world)? What do frogs eat? What invertebrates live in the flora immediately around the waters? What vertebrates? How healthy is the water?

Citizen environmental monitoring programs, particularly in conjunction with such organisations as *Water Watch* and the *Australian Citizen Science Association* are becoming more important in this era of accelerating depletion and disappearance of species. These programs provide more data than would otherwise be available, and the longitudinal studies can reveal trends.

Would you like to be a member of such a program - FESWI'S *Wetland Study Group* - that looks to find out what's going on in our wetlands and allied waterways? Learn to take samples, to use a microscope, to identify species, to generate computer pictures and lots more. And it's free!

FESWI is currently working to set up such a group. If you would like to know more, please get in touch with either Jim Wilson at ejbwilson02@gmail.com or Robin Clarey at robin.clarey@hotmail.com.



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TO FREEWAY OR NOT TO FREEWAY

To freeway or not to freeway – that is the question!

The proposed 9.7 kilometre Mordialloc Freeway/Bypass has just undergone a three-week Environmental Effects Statement hearing. FESWI, ably represented by Sue Telfer, together with other conservation groups have regularly attended and made presentations expressing concern over the impairment of the connectivity of the habitat range of the local fauna and the internationally significant birds which frequent Edithvale, Seaford and other local Wetlands and beyond.



Other concerns include the balancing of wildlife and human needs; issues of ecological impacts on biodiversity and how to minimise these; the loss of connectivity with reference to fauna, particularly at Braeside Park and with local residents along the alignment.

Also of concern is toxic leachate and the contamination of the soil from tips at the northern section; and disturbance of toxic chemicals underground contaminating the groundwater during construction.

Lots of issues for consideration.

More next issue of Warbler.

MIGRATORY BIRD POPULATIONS DEC–JAN

It has been a really good season for the shorebirds. The birds have been cycling through the ETP, the Seaford Wetlands and the Edithvale Wetlands in turn as each site provides optimum conditions. In December (2018), 2,000 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and 115 Latham’s Snipe were counted in SW corner of Seaford Wetlands.

The figures dropped as Seaford dried up in January and the birds moved on to Edithvale. Approximately 3,000 Sharp-tails were sighted at Edithvale (This is around 5% of the international population) and the highest number of Freckled Ducks (Threatened species) were recorded at Edithvale (66) and Braeside (70).

At the Down’s Estate - Bitterns, Rails, Terns, Stubble Quail and Sharpies (260) were sighted.

Based upon a report by Sean Dooley to the CLC.

Note: Abutting the Seaford Wetlands but not a part of them, the Down’s Estate (the north-east corner) has now become most productive since *Melbourne Water* let water into the area in late 2017,



Latham’s Snipe Photo: Allan Broomhall



Sharp-tailed Sandpipers Photo: Steve McDonald

SNIPPETS SNIPPETS SNIPPETS

Kindergarten Visit

On 6th December FESWI hosted 25 four-year-olds on a visit to the hide. Great session – the youngsters were lively and curious and fun to be with.



Summer by the Sea



On January 11th FESWI worked in conjunction with the Education Centre on *Summer by the Sea* activities. There were two groups - a morning group and an afternoon group each spending half the time at the Education Centre and the other half at the bird hide. Margaret Hunter, Robin Clarey and Phillip Wiersbowski (*Coastcare Victoria*) assisted at these sessions.

Cornish College Visit

A group of 18 year-10 students and their teacher visited the hide on 27th February to discover more about the wetlands and problems with pollution. A short walk on Edithvale North was included. These students were polite and friendly and a pleasure to work with. Bridy Sargent and Margaret Hunter assisted.



The Clean Up



Twelve hardy heroes turned up on Sunday March 3rd (an incredibly hot day) to participate in FESWI's version of *Clean Up Australia*.

A massive thank you to Jim, Renae, Jacqui, Silvana & Isi, Cathy, Arlis, Denise, Helen, Jeff and Craig who worked solidly for the two hours and made such a difference to the hide and Duck In surrounds.

Fantastic!

Glimpses

The history book, 'Glimpses' is now completed. Our next step is to seek a grant to enable us to publish. Many thanks to Dorothy Meadows who has done a sterling job on it.

Pamphlet Revised

FESWI's flagship pamphlet is being revised and reprinted. Thanks, Inez for attending to this.

HIDE VISIT

Edithvale Wetlands 17 Feb 2019

Leader: Jacqui Sheppard

By David Ap-Thomas

It was a beautiful warm sunny day for the outing to Edithvale Wetlands. 23 people attended including a couple from England on holidays. We gathered at the hide but the sun was directly in our faces so we went for the walk and returned to the hide at the end.

We crossed Springvale Road and commenced a walk through the parkland. Magpies, Noisy miners and Straw-necked Ibis were feeding in the grass and Crested Pigeons strutted their stuff. A small group of Musk Lorikeets flew out of a tree and disappeared.

We were trying to find Martins among the Welcome Swallows when we realised that a number of them were White-throated Needle-tails, very exciting. They stayed with us for the whole walk. Red and Little Wattlebirds called to let us know they were around. Spotted Pardalotes hid in the outer foliage and a young Grey Butcherbird was spotted just sitting in a tree.

We carefully approached the first of the ponds to find it full of waterbirds. The highlight was the 21 Freckled Ducks, some swimming and the rest standing in groups on the bank. Grey and Chestnut Teal were present in good numbers with a few Black Duck. A solitary Royal Spoonbill in bright white plumage contrasted with the dirty white of the White Ibis.

In the next pond we added Hardhead and Pelicans and an eagle-eyed person spotted the pair of Red-

rumped Parrots at the water's edge. A number of Latham's Snipe flew out of the reed bed and back in very quickly so you needed to be looking at the right place at the right time to see them. Reed Warblers also did quick dashes without giving us a proper look. Golden-headed Cisticolas called from somewhere in the long grass. A Swamp Harrier made a slow pass across the reeds in the distance.



Freckled Duck Photo: R Clarey

On to another pond, which only the tall could see into, revealed a solitary magpie-goose which has been in the area for many years. Also various cormorants and assorted ducks were present. An open area had many swallow-like birds skimming the grass

as they fed and these included both Tree and Fairy martins.

Back at the hide we were able to look out over the lake without getting blinded by the sun. The water level was well down so there were vast areas of dry mud. In the far distance there were a host of waders, mostly Sharp-tailed Sandpipers with a few Red-necked Stints and masked Lapwings. A Black-fronted Dotterel stood at a small puddle near the hide. Towards the end we found a young Red-kneed Dotterel with very little colour in the plumage and no red knees. A White-plumed honeyeater was in the eucalypts outside the hide but it was a very quiet day for honeyeaters.

A most enjoyable outing. 56 species for the day was excellent. Thanks Jacqui for leading us, we did enjoy the day.

Note

Bird hide is now closed until further notice. The water is gone and the birds are gone.

Watch website or facebook page for notice of re-opening.



WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BIRD?



The pelican is my favourite bird,
Comical or majestic - the line is blurred.

He has a sealed nose,
And four webbed toes,
And walks with a risible gait.

He has a huge bill.
With a pouch that can fill
With mackerel, flounder and skate.

In a scrape in the ground,
Her eggs can be found,
Numbering one to four.
The chicks they hatch bare
Needing all care
For a couple of months or more.

When the weather is hot,
The peli is not
For he vibrates the skin of his pouch.
His body is portly,
His legs, they are short(ly)
And the colours are Collingwood's- ouch!

But when they're in flight,
What a beautiful sight!
With ease, they circle and soar,
Slow wingbeats they trace
With elegance and grace.
And they fill me with wonder and awe.

Robin Clarey

Simpson & Day: Field Guide to the Birds of Australia

What is your favourite bird?

Tell us a little about it.

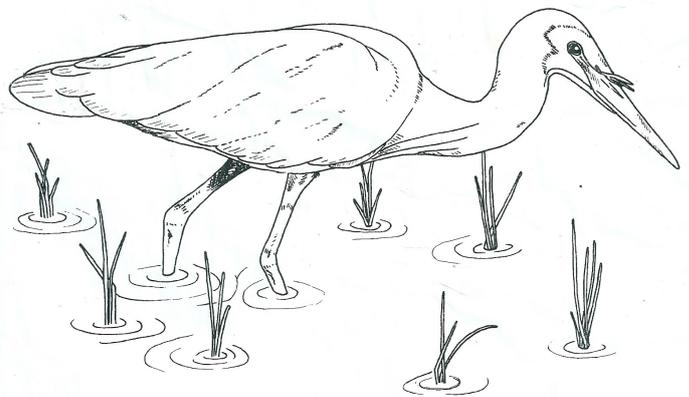
Why you like it.

Prose, a drawing, a poem, an
acrostic, a photo, any way you like.

We really want to know!

Send to robin.clarey@hotmail.com

Attached to the door of the hide. Artist unknown.



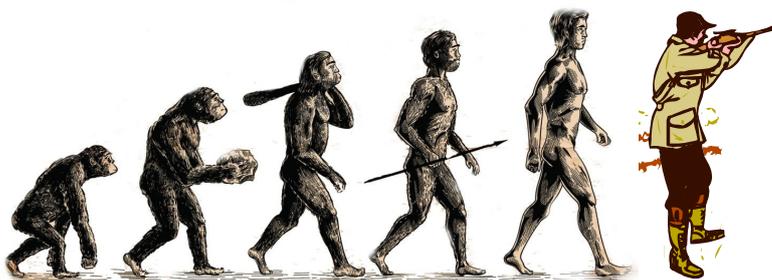
DUCK HUNTING

The season goes from middle March to middle May. How ridiculous is this given the drought and bushfires. Wouldn't you think the birds are already under enough pressure.

Contact Daniel Andrews

<https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/contact-us/>

And tell him so.



Austra-
lopithecus
(Hominid)

Homo
Habilis

Homo
Erectus

Homo
Neander-
thalensis

Homo
Sapiens
Sapiens

Homo
Ridiculus

Longbeach RSL
Tania Ireton
Viridans Pty Ltd

Patterson River Golf Club
Edithvale Family And Children's
Centre

Peninsula Pedallers,
Sonya Kilkenny
Ray White, Chelsea



**Melbourne
Water**

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